

ABSTRACT

When a reticle stage capable of moving while holding a reticle is at a predetermined unloading position, an unloading arm performs unloading of a
5 reticle. Also, the instant or immediately after the reticle is separated from the reticle stage by the unloading arm, the reticle stage is moved to a predetermined loading position where a reticle is loaded onto the reticle stage by a loading arm. This allows the
10 reticle to be loaded onto the reticle stage before the unloading arm completely withdraws from the unloading position, which reduces the downtime between the reticle unloading and the reticle loading. Accordingly, the throughput of the exposure apparatus can be improved,
15 since the time required for reticle exchange is reduced.